

I would like to encourage the passage of HB4610.

I would also like to state that I have no problem riding on a specific trail, if there is enough of them, they are long enough and they go to a pretty or interesting destination--not a loop just to be going in a circle. We just returned from a trip to the Great Smokey Mountains in Tennessee, with our horses. Over the 5 day visit we rode 100+ miles of different trails--from churches, overlooks, lakes, streams with beaver dams, historic buildings, even the Appalachian trail. We saw black bears, eagles, deer, snakes, lizards, dozens of wildflowers, the list is endless. What we did not see were logging trucks, clear cut areas and ugly jack pine plantations which appear to be the new norm for riding in Michigan. We went south to enjoy some early spring weather but we will be increasing the amount of out of state trips and may even relocate out of state if the DNR continues to treat horse riders as adversaries. People in those locals would be willing to bring their tourism dollars to MI during their hot humid summers if the proper trail systems and camps were established by the DNR .

We are talking about a significant amount of money. I track our finances with a software package that allows me to categorize expenses. My wife and I have made over \$300,000 in horse related expenditures since we have lived in MI (horses, feed, horse trailers, trucks, tack, etc.). I feel the DNR is not in sync with the needs of the people of the state. It cost us \$30/day to camp at a primitive horse camp (Gerry Lake near Empire, MI) with our Granddaughters and the amenities were a pit toilet and a non-working well pump. It cost us \$18/day to camp at a campground adjacent to Mamouth Cave National Park in KY with our Granddaughters and the amenities were electrical and water hook-ups, a shower house and flush toilets. There were approximately 60 miles of well marked and maintained horse trails in the KY park and they were adding more trails to attract more users. I don't mind paying the extra \$ to camp in MI and the lack of amenities is okay with us but at least let us ride on some scenic trails to make it worth our \$\$\$. I think the MI DNR could learn a great deal from their counterparts in other states we have been riding in. TN, IN, OH, KY all seem to be pro-horse tourism and MI is adversarial.

Thank you for your time. I am willing to discuss the topic at length, so feel free to contact me for further discussion if desired.

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